LEPC Connections
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Who Cleans Up After the Spill Responders Have Gone Home?

By Perry C. Cogburn
VDOT, Transportation Emergency Operations Center

It happens all too often — a moment's indecision results in two objects in motion coming together. That's fine on a football field but not on the highway. The resulting collision leaves twisted metal and vehicular fluids all over the place.

Emergency rescue, along with law enforcement, shows up to deal with the aftermath of the accident. Once the victims are assisted, the task of cleaning up begins in earnest. Since the vehicular fluids (engine oil, gasoline, diesel, and anti-freeze) cause the roadway to become slippery, sand is often put down to provide traction.

Now the sand is contaminated with those fluids and has to be picked up and disposed of properly. Whose responsibility is it?

This scenario happens every day in Virginia. Add into the mix materials illegally deposited along state highway right-of-ways and accidents involving vehicles hauling DOT-regulated hazardous materials, and the question of who is responsible for cleaning up becomes even more significant.

"Volume IV, Oil and Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan," of the state's Emergency Operations Plan, *generally* outlines roles and responsibilities of the various responding agencies. It does assign clean-up responsibilities for highway spills to the responsible party; however, this fact is often overlooked by the responding agencies.

Highway incidents happen every day in Virginia, but who's responsible for the cleanup?

Although not designated as a lead agency for oil and hazardous material cleanups, VDOT often finds itself left to handle spills and releases and remove abandoned containers of hazardous materials along roadways. Our employees are neither trained nor equipped to perform these cleanups; however, by default or convenience to the other responding agencies, VDOT is left to deal with cleanup, even in instances where there is a known responsible party.

Volume IV of the state EOP needs to be more specific regarding which agencies with the regulatory authority to deal with oil and hazardous material spills are going to be on scene and making decisions. There is currently a joint effort between the DES, DEQ, Virginia State Police, Virginia Maintenance Services, Inc. (VDOT highway maintenance company) and VDOT to create guidelines for the mitigation of accidental releases of motor vehicle fluids (non-cargo).

This effort is attempting to delineate roles and responsibilities of the typical incident management response agencies and could be used as a model for the revision of Volume IV.

VDOT will continue to do its part in responding to highway spills and providing equipment and materials to assist in containing them. However, employee safety regulations for spill responders — which specify hazardous materials training, personal protective equipment, and health monitoring requirements — make it impractical for VDOT to continue to participate in the cleanup of oil and hazardous material spills. Clearly, the initiating response agencies, not VDOT, should be closing the loop on emergency response actions because they have the resources and responsibility to do so.

VDOT looks forward to working with all response agencies in developing a plan that protects all users of the highway system.

Editor's Note: The Virginia Oil and Hazardous Materials Plan is being revised, and the update will address many of the issues discussed here. ❑

Colonial Pipeline and Newport News Stage Oil Spill Response Exercise

By Janet C. Queisser
Department of Environmental Quality
Office of Spill Response and Remediation

A pressure drop is detected in the pipeline. Commuters and nearby military base personnel report a strong petroleum odor. A heavy oil slick is moving fast across the reservoir. Public water supply intake is shut down.

Catastrophe of the decade? Not really. This was the scenario of an oil spill response exercise recently held by Colonial Pipeline Company (CP) and the City of Newport News.

This spill drill was one of the requirements for a federal Facility Response Plan (FRP) holder. Pipeline FRPs are administered by Research and Special Projects Administration (RSPA) of the Office of Pipeline Safety, under authority of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90).

Legislated by Congress after the Exxon Valdez spill, OPA 90 requires that, among other things, large oil facilities, tank vessels, and pipelines have federally approved response plans and conduct exercises to ensure the plans work.

Pipelines are also required to have an approved Virginia Oil Discharge Contingency Plan (ODCP). A pipeline ODCP differs from an FRP by having provisions for groundwater assessment in the event of a discharge and no requirements for specific spill exercises.

This particular drill was an equipment deployment exercise planned and paid for by Colonial Pipeline. In addition, the company planners used the drill to test the response management and organization of its regional and headquarters staff by not announcing it prior to the call out.

The drill planning team included a representative from the City of Newport News. The drill was also unannounced to city waterworks personnel.

To effectively challenge the company's response management team in the operation of the Unified Command, DEQ and the U. S. Coast Guard participated in the exercise as State On-Scene Coordinator (SOSC) and Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC), respectively.

Colonial Pipeline's Operations Manager Leo Strong meets with Unified Command members Tom Kahler, Newport News Waterworks (far right), Janet Queisser, DEQ (far left) and Lt. Connie Rooke, USCG (center)

Personnel from the DEQ Tidewater regional office and the Coast Guard's response team played their respective roles in the Operations Section. Newport News Waterworks (NNWW) personnel implemented their response plan to prevent contamination to the water treatment plant and switch to the backup supply.

To effectively focus and manage the exercise objectives, the company chose to simulate the normally complex aspects of the emergency phase of the incident and did not include active participation of fire, HAZMAT or other emergency responders.

The scenario unfolded west of the intersection of I-64 and Fort Eustis Boulevard when a 10-inch-wide section of linepipe, delivering jet fuel to the Navy Fuel Farm at Yorktown, simulated a discharge of kerosene-like fuel into the Newport News reservoir and the headwaters of the Warwick River.

The volumes were a dynamic discharge of 190 barrels (8,300 gallons) directly to the reservoir and static drainup of 440 barrels (19,360 gallons) to the upper reaches of the river. (The static drainup is the amount of product discharged after the shutdown of the pipeline.) The scenario called for heavy rain within 24 hours.

At a very early hour of the morning, Colonial Pipeline regional staff received data simulating the pipeline pressure drop. They determined the precise location of the discharge point based on this information.

To further simulate a realistic situation, they were provided with hints about the location of the spill, including reports of petroleum fumes near Fort Eustis and the Newport News water plant. After confirming the location, the response contractor, IMS, was dispatched and began boom deployment on the reservoir and containment and other countermeasures on the Warwick River.

When the simulated pressure drop was reported, notifications were also made to Colonial Pipeline's Response Management Team in Atlanta. The Colonial Pipeline team boarded the company jet and arrived in Newport News by midmorning.

While this was happening, NNWW personnel were notified of a significant presence of petroleum in the reservoir, threatening contamination of the water supply intake. Though "this is a drill" prefaced all communications with NNWW, the water system manager directed the staff, as planned, to actually shut down the intake and switch over to the alternate water

source for the duration of the exercise.

This enabled the NNWW to implement its own emergency procedures without disrupting service to residential and industrial water users. (It is important to note the alternate water source has an estimated 12-hour supply.)

By noon, the Unified Command included a representative from Colonial Pipeline, the U. S. Coast Guard serving as FOSC, and the DEQ as SOSC.

The Operations Section was the primary focus at this stage of the exercise, with the Planning Section moving quickly to establish response objectives that would direct Operations.

By midafternoon, operational plans based on the parallel objectives to contain and remove oil from both the reservoir and the Warwick River were established. Because the exercise was scheduled for one day, all the equipment was demobilized by late afternoon.

The debriefing reviewed successes as well as areas in need of improvement. The exercise objectives were met and all parties benefited from the non-adversarial circumstances.

Though this particular exercise was limited by design, the scenario prompted discussion of subsequent developing issues. For example:

- How would NNWW deal with providing residential and industrial water users with water beyond the 12-hour window for the alternate water supply?
- How would concerns for health and safety issues be communicated to the public?
- With fire and rescue first on the scene, how would the transition of the incident to a post-emergency stage be accomplished?
- How would access to the cleanup site be controlled during cleanup?
- How would the recovered oil and water be handled? How about contaminated soils and sorbent materials?
- How would shifts be manned after the first 12 hours?
- What procedures would ensure efficient transition of personnel within the Unified Command?
- Are there procedures in place to account for personnel expenses incurred during the incident? Are they consistent among the state, federal and local government agencies?

Honestly conducted exercises with open-minded reviews can assist with making the unpredictable more predictable and preparing your agency or locality for a major spill.

For more information concerning Virginia's Oil Discharge Contingency Plan Program, contact Janet Queisser at DEQ, Office of Spill Response and Remediation in Richmond at (804) 698-4268 or e-mail jcqueisser@deq.state.va.us. ❑

SEPs Can Bring LEPC Projects to Fruition

By J. Daniel Eggleston
Chief of Emergency Services,
City of Franklin, Chair, FSI-LEPC

How can a Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) impact an LEPC? The Franklin/Southampton/Isle of Wight (FSI) LEPC's answer is: dramatically.

FSI's LEPC is currently working with Hercules, Inc., to facilitate the region's first SEP. Hercules is a specialty chemical production facility west of the city of Franklin and employs approximately 130 people.

The Hercules facility was recently fined by DEQ for exceeding their wastewater permit for "Total Suspended Solids." The Hercules facility approached DEQ about a SEP as a means to pay for a portion of their fine under the new SEP regulations. The company wanted to conduct an emergency response drill to improve area response to chemical releases which would ensure protection of the area's waterways. Through their involvement with the local emergency responders, Hercules knew this was an area where improvements could be made.

DEQ and VDES notified the FSI that Hercules was eligible to apply for an SEP. The FSI's LEPC saw this as an opportunity to facilitate a positive project for the region and, at the same time, strengthen our relationship with local industry.

Our first plan was to better understand the purpose and scope of a SEP. After discussions with VDES and DEQ, we felt confident of our mission.

Hercules and the LEPC had about five months to submit a plan to DEQ for approval and formed a subcommittee to develop a strategy. The subcommittee consisted of representatives from Hercules, LG&E (a local cogeneration facility), and Franklin Fire and Rescue. The subcommittee determined a project supporting emergency planning would best suit the region.

The FSI's LEPC is a non-funded entity and operates solely on donations. The region's fire and rescue departments are comprised of mostly volunteers with small operational budgets. Therefore, the subcommittee wanted a project that would fund training programs and the purchase of equipment.

An addendum to the FSI Hazardous Materials Response Plan was submitted to VDES detailing the elements of the SEP. It included a tabletop exercise, a full-scale drill, and a list of supplies, equipment, and training needed to support response.

The subcommittee also put together a skeleton plan providing awareness and operational HAZMAT training to local responders.

Once the initial training was completed, a tabletop exercise and a large-scale drill would be conducted to identify additional deficiencies. The entire process would take approximately 8-10 months.

"We wanted to develop a 'train-evaluate-identify' process to further develop the skills and knowledge of the first responders. We believe this plan helps us achieve our goal," said Steve Spence, environmental supervisor for Hercules, Inc.

The subcommittee felt the SEP would not only train and test first responders, but also test the region's capability of a multi-jurisdictional response. The large-scale drill would include emergency responders from the City of Franklin Fire and Rescue, Southampton Fire and Rescue, Southampton Sheriffs' Department, Virginia State Police, VDOT, VDES, the Tidewater Regional HAZMAT Team, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

The SEP provides additional benefits for other regional agencies. By becoming involved in the planning process, these agencies will be better prepared to develop, manage, and evaluate disaster drills for their agencies. In fact, VDES will conduct disaster drill planning in the region targeting specific needs of the FSI LEPC.

The plan has been submitted to DEQ and we're looking forward to participating in the SEP. Not only will the project better prepare our region for HAZMAT emergencies, but it will strengthen our relationship with local industry, creating opportunities for future partnerships. ❑

Mid-Atlantic Coastal Area PREP Exercise Planned

USCG Marine Safety Office Hampton Roads and the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Area Committee are sponsoring a Prepared for Response Exercise Program Area Oil Spill Exercise. We would like to offer the opportunity to participate to the Mid-Atlantic Area emergency management and oil spill response community. The Incident Command System organization will be utilized for this exercise. The primary objective of the exercise is to test the ICS response organization; therefore, there will be no actual equipment deployment. ICS is utilized by the U.S. Coast Guard and other organizations to manage major events such as emergency response to oil spills, hurricanes and maritime incidents.

Where: Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel
777 Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA

When: Wednesday, March 17, 1999, 1200-1500
Player Indoc and Training

Thursday, March 18, 1999, 0730-1800
Exercise

Friday, March 19, 1999, 0800-1200
Debrief/Evaluation

If you or someone in your organization is interested in participating, please provide the following information by fax to (757) 441-3262 or email LT Connie Rooke at crooke@msohamptonroads.uscg.mil with the necessary information. If you have any questions, please call (757) 441-3453.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Organization:_____

Position:_____

Email: _____

ICS Section or position preference:
_____

Previous ICS Training/Experience (please circle):

None ICS-200 ICS-300 Tabletop Ex PREP Ex

Other:_____

An Observer Program has also been developed for those people that may not have a role in the exercise but are interested in learning more about the PREP program. The Observer Program will give you an overview of the PREP, the objectives for the exercise, and an opportunity to observe a portion of actual exercise play.

Pollution response equipment supplied by the Coast Guard Atlantic Strike Team will be on display near the exercise site. If you have any questions, please contact LT Karen Jones at (757) 398-6689 or email to jonesk@lantd5.uscg.mil. Please submit your request by February 19, 1999.

Development of Hazardous Materials Database in Virginia Completed

By George Roarty
Chemical Emergency Preparedness Manager, VDES

The VDES Technological Hazards Division has completed the statewide hazardous materials database.

A survey of LEPC resources was conducted between July and August, 1998, and the information received was incorporated into jurisdictional CAMEO folders before being aggregated by the 13 regional HAZMAT team-service areas.

The types of resources identified in the survey included spill-response trailers, foam units, light units, air units, water tankers, and facility and airport HAZMAT teams.

The data is currently being distributed to each of the 13 regional HAZMAT teams on zip disks. The aggregated data for the entire state will also be placed on a CD and distributed to each of the Hazardous Materials Officers and Hazardous Materials Teams.

In addition, each LEPC will receive a copy of their planning district data on a 3-1/2-inch floppy disk for their review and maintenance. Update and data transfer procedures will be included with the local data.

Each LEPC will be asked to designate a person or persons to be responsible for the review and update of the local database.

VDES is also exploring the feasibility of developing an on-line system that would make it easier to maintain and update the database. We envision that user groups will be established in each of the regions to address any issues that may arise when the program is implemented, as well as to prepare for the spring/summer update. ❐

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